



READING COMPREHENSION

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PREFACE

All praise and gratitude we extend to God Almighty for His grace and blessings, which have enabled us to successfully complete this book entitled *Mastering Reading Comprehension* as scheduled.

This book is structured as a comprehensive guide to help learners build and master their reading comprehension skills in English. It begins with an Introduction to the concept and importance of reading comprehension, followed by an exploration of various types of texts that readers commonly encounter. The book then outlines step-by-step methods to enhance reading skills, provides practical reading exercises, and includes questions to test comprehension.

Further, the readers will be guided through techniques for identifying main ideas, applying critical thinking in reading, and integrating the learned strategies through concluding insights and further practice. With this progression, the book aims to develop not only reading proficiency but also analytical and evaluative skills essential for academic, professional, and real-world reading situations.

Each chapter offers clear explanations, relevant examples, and useful strategies, making it suitable for students and anyone aiming to improve their reading comprehension in a structured and meaningful way.

We are fully aware that this book is far from perfect. Therefore, we sincerely welcome any constructive criticism and suggestions from all readers for the improvement of this book in the future.

Finally, we would like to express our heartfelt thanks to everyone who contributed to the preparation of this book from beginning to end. May God Almighty always bless all our efforts. Amen.

June 2025, Author

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Understand the basic concept of reading comprehension.

A. What is Reading Comprehension?

Reading comprehension refers to the ability to understand, interpret, and analyze written texts. It's a fundamental skill that allows readers to not only read the words on a page but also to grasp the meaning behind those words. The process involves various mental activities like decoding the words, understanding the meaning of sentences, drawing conclusions, and connecting ideas within the text.

B. Why is Reading Comprehension Important?

Reading comprehension is essential because it is the foundation for acquiring knowledge and information in all areas of life. Whether it's reading a textbook for school, following instructions, or reading the news, effective comprehension is key to making sense of the material.

Here are a few reasons why reading comprehension is important:

1. **Academic Success:** Understanding texts in subjects like literature, science, history, and mathematics is critical for students to excel academically.
2. **Critical Thinking Skills:** It encourages active engagement with the text, requiring readers to think critically, analyze content, and form their own opinions or conclusions.
3. **Real-World Applications:** In daily life, reading comprehension helps us understand bills, instructions, news articles, and social media content, enabling us to make informed decisions.
4. **Building Vocabulary:** The more you read, the more exposure you get to new words. Reading comprehension strengthens your vocabulary and helps you understand how words function in different contexts.

C. Key Components of Reading Comprehension

Understanding reading comprehension involves breaking it down into its key components:

1. **Decoding:**

This is the ability to recognize and process words. It involves understanding phonics (the relationship between letters and sounds) to correctly read words. Decoding is a fundamental skill before a person can truly understand what they read.

2. **Vocabulary Knowledge:**
Comprehension is closely linked to knowing the meanings of words. Readers need to understand both basic vocabulary and more complex words to get the full meaning of a text.
3. **Sentence Structure & Grammar:**
Recognizing sentence structures and how grammar works helps readers understand how ideas are connected. If a reader struggles with understanding sentence structure, it can hinder comprehension.
4. **Contextual Clues:**
Often, readers may come across unfamiliar words. Contextual clues are hints within the text, such as nearby words or phrases, that help define an unknown word. Understanding these clues can help readers figure out meanings without needing a dictionary.
5. **Inference:**
Inferences are conclusions that readers draw based on the information provided in the text. Not everything is always explicitly stated; good readers can fill in gaps by making reasonable guesses based on the evidence in the text.
6. **Identifying the Main Idea:**
Every text has a main idea, which is the primary point or argument the author is trying to communicate. Being able to identify the main idea helps readers understand the text as a whole and focus on its central message.
7. **Critical Thinking and Interpretation:**
Critical thinking involves asking questions about the text, evaluating the evidence presented, and considering alternative viewpoints. It's about going beyond simple understanding to interpret the deeper meaning of what you're reading.

D. How Does Reading Comprehension Work?

Let's break down the process into steps that happen when you read a text:

1. **Pre-reading:**
Before you read, you may look at the title, images, or headings to get a sense of what the text is about. This prepares your brain for the content and helps you set goals for reading (e.g., "I want to understand the main idea" or "I need to find specific information").
2. **Reading:**
As you read, your brain decodes the words, connects them to your prior knowledge, and tries to make sense of the sentences. At this stage, you're actively engaging with the text.

3. Comprehending:

You start to understand the meaning of the sentences and paragraphs. Your brain tries to relate new information to what you already know. You might visualize the scenes, connect ideas, and note any confusing parts you need to clarify later.

4. Post-reading:

After reading, it's important to review and reflect on what you've learned. You may summarize the text, ask questions, or identify the main points. This helps solidify the information and enhances long-term retention.

E. Levels of Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension can be categorized into different levels of understanding:

1. Literal Comprehension:

This involves understanding the explicit meaning of the text—the facts and information that are directly stated. For example, answering questions like "Who is the main character?" or "What is the setting?"

2. Inferential Comprehension:

This level goes beyond what is directly stated and requires readers to make inferences. For example, readers might need to figure out why a character behaves in a certain way or predict what might happen next in a story based on clues in the text.

3. Evaluative Comprehension:

At this level, readers evaluate the quality and validity of the text. They might ask, "Do I agree with the author's perspective?" or "How credible is the information?" This involves critical thinking and forming personal judgments about the text.

F. Improving Reading Comprehension Skills

Reading comprehension is a skill that can be developed over time with practice. Here are a few tips to improve reading comprehension:

- **Read Regularly:** The more you read, the better your comprehension will become.
- **Practice Active Reading:** Take notes, underline key points, and ask questions as you read.
- **Discuss What You Read:** Talking about the text with others can help reinforce your understanding.

- **Use Contextual Clues:** Don't hesitate to guess the meaning of unfamiliar words based on the surrounding text.
- **Summarize and Review:** After reading, summarize what you've learned. This can help you retain the information.

G. Why is Reading Important in Daily Life?

1. Acquiring Knowledge and Information

Reading is one of the most important ways we gather information in the modern world. Whether it's reading newspapers, online articles, or books, much of the knowledge we use in daily life comes from written sources. In our day-to-day activities, we rely on reading for:

- **News and Current Events:** Keeping up with what's happening around the world, locally, or even in specific fields like technology, politics, or entertainment. This helps us make informed decisions.
- **Instructions and Manuals:** Whether you're assembling furniture, cooking a recipe, or setting up a new device, reading instructions ensures that we can successfully complete tasks.
- **Guides and How-To Resources:** Whether you want to learn a new skill (e.g., playing an instrument, coding, or fixing a car), reading educational resources gives us the tools to grow.

2. Communication and Social Interaction

Reading enhances our ability to communicate effectively. In today's world, written communication (texts, emails, social media) is crucial for staying in touch with others, whether for work, school, or personal reasons. Here's how reading aids communication:

- **Texting, Emails, and Social Media:** These are central to modern communication. Reading these messages allows us to understand and respond appropriately to people in our lives.
- **Building Vocabulary:** The more we read, the more words and expressions we are exposed to. A richer vocabulary helps us express our ideas clearly and persuasively, whether we're in personal conversations, meetings, or online discussions.

3. Cognitive and Mental Development

Reading is an excellent exercise for your brain. It stimulates cognitive function and helps improve brain performance in several ways:

- **Enhances Critical Thinking:** Reading requires us to think critically about the text, analyze arguments, and draw conclusions. This strengthens our problem-solving skills and decision-making abilities in daily life.

- **Improves Focus and Concentration:** Reading a text demands attention and concentration, which helps improve mental focus. This is particularly important in tasks that require extended focus, such as work or study.
- **Expands Knowledge Base:** Every time you read, whether it's fiction or non-fiction, you are learning new information, expanding your worldview, and growing your understanding of various topics.

4. Personal Growth and Emotional Intelligence

Reading not only helps you learn about the world, but also helps you understand yourself and others. This is particularly true with reading fiction and biographies, which allow you to step into someone else's shoes:

- **Empathy and Emotional Understanding:** Reading novels, short stories, or even biographies can give insight into other people's emotions, struggles, and viewpoints. This can help you build empathy and emotional intelligence, making you more attuned to the feelings of others in your personal and professional relationships.
- **Self-Reflection and Motivation:** Reading self-help books, motivational articles, or philosophical texts can guide you toward personal development. Many people find inspiration in books that help them set goals, develop habits, or overcome personal challenges.

5. Entertainment and Stress Relief

Reading can be a great form of entertainment and escapism. Whether you're reading fiction, magazines, or comics, the act of getting lost in a story can be a way to relax and take a break from the stresses of daily life. This serves several purposes:

- **Escaping Reality:** For many, reading is a form of escape. It can transport you to new worlds, times, and perspectives. Fiction, especially, can help readers imagine things that they would not encounter in real life, which helps reduce stress.
- **Recreational Enjoyment:** Books, articles, and stories provide enjoyment and leisure in the same way that movies or video games do, but often in a more personal and deep manner.

6. Professional and Career Development

Reading is an indispensable part of professional growth and career advancement. In virtually every field, reading plays a role in:

- **Staying Updated in Your Field:** Whether it's reading professional journals, industry reports, or business articles, staying informed about developments in your field helps you stay competitive.

- **Enhancing Writing and Communication Skills:** Reading helps us develop a more professional writing style. The more you read well-written texts, the more you will naturally improve your ability to write clear and concise emails, reports, proposals, etc.
- **Problem-Solving:** Often in the workplace, reading guides, case studies, or research papers helps you find solutions to challenges and problems. Professionals who read regularly are more likely to think critically and approach problems from multiple angles.

7. Improving Overall Well-Being

Interestingly, reading also contributes to our mental well-being:

- **Stress Reduction:** Reading has been shown to reduce stress by focusing the mind on something other than the day's worries. Even just six minutes of reading can reduce stress levels by up to 68% (according to research by the University of Sussex).
- **Better Sleep:** Reading, especially before bedtime, can help you unwind and prepare your mind for sleep. A good book can create a relaxing pre-sleep routine, which leads to better rest.

H. How Does Reading Fit Into Daily Life?

1. Morning:

You might read the news or check your emails. This helps you start your day informed and ready to engage in your tasks.

2. Throughout the Day:

During work or study, reading emails, reports, or manuals is crucial. In personal life, you might read books, social media updates, or text messages that keep you connected.

3. Evening:

Before bed, many people enjoy reading as a relaxing activity to wind down. Whether it's a book or a podcast, reading provides an opportunity for relaxation and mental escape.

I. Improve skills in reading various types of texts.

Types of Texts and How to Approach Them

1. Descriptive Texts

Descriptive texts provide details about a person, place, object, or event. The goal is often to create a vivid picture in the reader's mind.

Characteristics:

- Focus on sensory details: sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch.
- Use of adjectives and figurative language (e.g., metaphors, similes).

- Aims to engage the reader's imagination.

How to Improve Comprehension:

- Visualize what is being described as you read. Try to create a mental image of the scene, object, or person.
- Identify sensory details in the text. Pay attention to how the author uses descriptive language to evoke emotions and set the scene.
- Practice summarizing the description in your own words, focusing on the key sensory elements.

Example Exercise:

Read the following descriptive text and answer the questions.

Text:

"The old library was quiet and still, its tall wooden shelves filled with dusty volumes of books. The scent of leather and paper filled the air as the sunlight filtered through the tall windows, casting golden beams onto the marble floor."

Questions:

- What sensory details are described in the text?
- What is the atmosphere of the library?

2. Narrative Texts

Narrative texts tell a story, whether fictional or factual. They involve characters, settings, events, and often follow a plot structure (beginning, middle, and end).

Characteristics:

- Includes elements like characters, settings, conflict, and resolution.
- Often written in a chronological or sequential order.
- Uses dialogue and descriptions to move the story forward.

How to Improve Comprehension:

- Identify the plot structure: Try to outline the main events in the story (beginning, middle, and end).
- Focus on characters: Think about how the characters evolve throughout the narrative and how their actions contribute to the plot.
- Understand the theme: What is the main message or lesson of the story?

Example Exercise:

Read the following narrative and answer the questions.

Text:

"Lara was walking through the forest when she heard a rustling noise behind her. She stopped and turned around, her heart racing. There, standing between the trees, was a fox with glowing eyes. Slowly, it approached her and then, to her surprise, sat at her feet, watching her calmly."

Questions:

1. What is the setting of the story?
2. How does Lara react to the fox?
3. What do you think the fox symbolizes?

3. Expository Texts

Expository texts explain or inform. They provide facts, details, or instructions and aim to educate the reader about a particular topic.

Characteristics:

- Factual information.
- Clear, direct, and logical structure.
- Includes data, examples, definitions, and explanations.

How to Improve Comprehension:

- Highlight key facts and details: Focus on the main information the author is presenting. Look for definitions, explanations, or examples that clarify the topic.
- Identify the structure: Is the text organized by cause and effect, problem and solution, or comparison and contrast? Understanding the structure can help you better organize the information in your mind.
- Summarize: After reading, write a brief summary of the main points.

Example Exercise:

Read the following expository text and answer the questions.

Text:

"The Earth orbits the Sun in an elliptical path. It takes approximately 365.25 days for the Earth to complete one orbit, which is the basis for our calendar year. The Earth's orbit is not perfectly circular; instead, it is slightly elongated, which is why we experience seasons."

Questions:

1. How long does it take for the Earth to orbit the Sun?
2. What causes the seasons?

4. Argumentative Texts

Argumentative texts present a claim or opinion and provide reasons and evidence to support it. The goal is to persuade the reader to accept a particular point of view.

Characteristics:

- Clearly presents an argument or stance on an issue.
- Provides evidence, reasoning, or examples to support the argument.
- Often includes a counterargument to address opposing views.

How to Improve Comprehension:

- Identify the thesis or main argument: What is the author trying to persuade the reader to believe or do?
- Evaluate the evidence: Consider the strength of the evidence provided. Are the examples or statistics convincing? Are there any logical fallacies?
- Analyze the counterargument: How does the author address opposing viewpoints? Does the author successfully refute them?

Example Exercise:

Read the following argumentative text and answer the questions.

Text:

"School uniforms should be mandatory in all schools. They promote equality by eliminating fashion-related bullying and help students focus more on their studies. Studies have shown that when students wear uniforms, they perform better academically."

Questions:

1. What is the main argument of the text?
2. What evidence does the author provide to support the argument?
3. Do you agree with the argument? Why or why not?

5. Informational Texts

Informational texts provide factual details about a specific topic or subject. These texts can be articles, reports, or essays that aim to inform rather than persuade or entertain.

Characteristics:

- Factual and straightforward.
- Includes data, facts, and explanations.
- Organized logically, often using headings, subheadings, and bullet points.

How to Improve Comprehension:

- Focus on key facts and data: Look for important statistics, dates, and names that help to clarify the subject.
- Break the text into sections: Use headings and subheadings to divide the information into manageable chunks.
- Rephrase the information: After reading, summarize the information in your own words to ensure you understood the material.

Example Exercise:

Read the following informational text and answer the questions.

Text:

"The Great Barrier Reef, located off the coast of Australia, is the largest coral reef system in the world. It spans over 2,300 kilometers and is home to thousands of species of marine life, including fish, corals, and marine mammals. The reef is a UNESCO World Heritage site and is protected by various environmental laws."

Questions:

1. Where is the Great Barrier Reef located?
2. What makes the Great Barrier Reef special?

J. General Strategies for Reading Different Types of Texts

- **Active Reading:** Always approach reading with the mindset of actively engaging with the text. Underline key points, take notes, and ask questions.
- **Practice Skimming and Scanning:** For expository and informational texts, skimming (reading quickly for the main ideas) and scanning (looking for specific details or facts) are important skills.
- **Summarize and Review:** After reading each type of text, summarize the key points in your own words. This will help you internalize the information and improve recall.
- **Discuss and Debate:** For argumentative texts, engaging in discussions or debates can help clarify your understanding and strengthen your position on the topic.

K. Conclusion

Reading is not just a skill for students or academics—it's an essential activity that plays a huge role in virtually every aspect of our daily lives. From communication and professional development to personal growth and stress relief, reading shapes how we interact with the world around us. It broadens our minds, enhances our understanding of different perspectives, and helps us navigate life with greater confidence and skill.

By recognizing the importance of reading in daily life, you can begin to make reading a more intentional part of your routine, ensuring that it benefits you both personally and professionally. Improving reading skills across different types of texts requires practice and the application of specific strategies tailored to each genre. By learning to identify the features of each text type and employing techniques such as visualization, summarization, and critical

evaluation, you can significantly enhance your ability to comprehend and engage with various texts effectively.

CHAPTER 2

TYPES OF TEXTS TO READ

A. Types of Texts to Read

1. Descriptive Texts

Descriptive texts aim to **create a vivid picture** in the reader's mind about a person, place, object, or event. The primary goal is to provide a detailed portrayal, using sensory details to engage the reader's imagination. These texts are focused on **showing** rather than **telling**, meaning they don't just explain what something is but evoke a strong image of it. For instance, instead of simply saying, "The forest is beautiful," a descriptive text would explain how the forest **looks, smells, feels, and sounds** to make the reader experience its beauty more deeply.

Purpose: To describe a person, place, object, or event in vivid detail, often focusing on sensory experiences. Descriptive texts aim to paint a clear picture in the reader's mind.

Examples:

Text:

"The forest was alive with sound. The rustling of the leaves in the wind mixed with the distant chirps of birds and the soft hum of insects. Shafts of sunlight pierced through the thick canopy above, casting intricate patterns on the forest floor. The ground was damp beneath her feet, the smell of moss and earth filling the air as she walked deeper into the woods. Every step was a gentle squish in the soft, spongy soil, and the cool air brushed against her face, refreshing her spirit."

Analysis:

- **Sensory Details:** The text uses a combination of sounds (rustling leaves, bird chirps), smells (moss and earth), and physical sensations (damp ground, cool air) to describe the forest.
- **Figurative Language:** The sunlight "pierced" the canopy, and the forest floor is described as "spongy"—giving life and texture to the setting.
- **Atmosphere:** The atmosphere feels peaceful and natural, evoking a sense of calm and immersion in nature.

Exercises to Practice Descriptive Writing and Reading

1. Visualize a Place:

Read a descriptive passage and close your eyes. Try to visualize every detail. How does it feel to be in that place? What stands out most to you? Write down your impressions.

2. Write Your Own Descriptions:

Pick an object, place, or person around you. Write a short descriptive passage that appeals to at least three senses (sight, sound, and smell). Try to avoid telling what it is directly and instead **show** the reader through vivid imagery.

3. Compare Descriptive Texts:

Read two different descriptions of the same object or place. How does each writer use language differently? Which description helps you visualize the scene better? Why?

Key Features:

- Rich in adjectives (words that describe qualities).
- Often uses similes, metaphors, and other figurative language.
- Appeals to senses: sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell.

How to Read:

- Visualize the described scenes or objects in your mind.
- Pay attention to how details help you form a mental image.
- Focus on sensory words and how they contribute to the atmosphere or mood.

Example:

"The mountain was covered in snow, its peaks sharp and white against the dark blue sky. The crisp air smelled fresh, and the silence around her was only broken by the crunch of her boots in the snow."

Questions to Consider:

- What sensory experiences are highlighted (sight, sound, touch)?
- What emotions or atmosphere are created by the description?

2. Narrative Texts

Narrative texts are designed to **tell a story**. Whether it's a short story, novel, biography, or even a personal anecdote, narrative texts focus on conveying a sequence of events, often involving characters, a setting, a plot, and a conflict that is resolved at the end. They are a **fundamental form of storytelling** that help readers experience emotions, understand human behavior, and learn lessons through the actions and outcomes of characters.

Purpose: To **tell a story**. Narrative texts describe a sequence of events and often have characters, a setting, a plot, and a conflict or problem that is resolved by the end of the story.

Examples:

- Short stories
- Novels

- Autobiographies and biographies
- Fairy tales and myths

Key Features:

- A plot (the sequence of events).
- Characters (protagonist, antagonist).
- Setting (time and place).
- Conflict and resolution.
- Dialogue and descriptions of actions and events.

How to Read:

- Pay attention to the plot structure (beginning, middle, and end).
- Track character development—how do characters change throughout the story?
- Understand the theme—what message or lesson does the story convey?

Example:

"Anna was always afraid of the dark, but tonight, for the first time, she walked through the forest alone, her flashlight flickering in the wind. Suddenly, she heard a rustling in the bushes. Heart racing, she stepped closer and found... a lost kitten."

Questions to Consider:

- What is the main conflict of the story?
- How do the characters respond to challenges?
- What lesson or message might the story convey?

3. Expository Texts

Expository texts are designed to inform, explain, or clarify a topic or concept in a straightforward, clear, and factual manner. The main goal is to provide objective information rather than to entertain or persuade. Expository writing is used to explain how something works, give directions, define terms, compare and contrast ideas, or present information in a logical sequence. In everyday life, expository texts are commonly found in news articles, textbooks, scientific papers, how-to guides, and encyclopedia entries.

Purpose: To inform or explain a specific topic, often providing facts, details, and examples. These texts focus on delivering information clearly and concisely.

Examples:

- Textbooks
- How-to guides
- News articles
- Reports (e.g., scientific or technical reports).

Key Features:

- Facts and evidence (statistics, examples, definitions).
- Organized with headings and subheadings.
- Clear, objective tone—it avoids opinions or personal feelings.
- Logical flow of ideas, often following a structure (cause/effect, problem/solution, etc.).

How to Read:

- Identify main ideas by looking at headings, subheadings, and topic sentences.
- Highlight key facts and concepts.
- Summarize the key points in your own words to ensure you understand the material.

Example:

"Photosynthesis is the process by which plants convert light energy into chemical energy stored in glucose. During this process, plants absorb sunlight through their leaves and use carbon dioxide and water to produce glucose and oxygen."

Questions to Consider:

- What are the key points or facts presented?
- How is the information organized (chronologically, cause/effect, etc.)?
- Can you summarize the main topic in a sentence or two?

4. Argumentative Texts

Argumentative texts are written to persuade the reader to accept a particular viewpoint or to take a specific action. These texts aim to present a well-reasoned argument by using evidence, logical reasoning, and counterarguments to support a claim. The goal is to convince the audience that the writer's position on an issue is more valid or reasonable than others. Argumentative writing is common in debates, editorials, opinion columns, essays, and legal or political discussions, where the aim is to influence public opinion or promote change.

Purpose: To persuade the reader to agree with a particular opinion or stance. These texts present an argument and back it up with evidence, reasoning, and examples.

Examples:

- Opinion editorials (Op-Eds)
- Persuasive essays
- Debates